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[Home](#) > Antievolution bill dead in Iowa

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03.16.2009

[Antievolution bill dead in Iowa](#) [3]



[House File 183](#) [4], the so-called Evolution Academic Freedom Act, died in committee in the Iowa House of Representatives on March 13, 2009. The bill purported to protect the right of teachers in the state's public schools and instructors in the state's public community colleges and state universities to "objectively present scientific information relevant to the full range of scientific views regarding biological and chemical evolution in connection with teaching any prescribed curriculum regarding chemical or biological evolution," providing that they "shall not be disciplined, denied tenure, terminated, or otherwise discriminated against" for doing so. Also, the bill added, although students "shall be evaluated based upon their understanding of course materials through standard testing procedures," they "shall not be penalized for subscribing to a particular position or view regarding biological or chemical evolution."

The Iowa State Education Association — the state affiliate of the National Education Association, representing over 34,000 education employees in Iowa — was opposed to HF 183, and over two hundred faculty members at Iowa's colleges and universities endorsed a statement calling on Iowa's legislature to reject it, [arguing](#) [5], "It is misleading to claim that there is any controversy or dissent within the vast majority of the scientific community regarding the scientific validity of evolutionary theory." In a March 13, 2009, guest post at The Panda's Thumb blog, Hector Avalos of Iowa State University, one of the faculty members who drafted the statement, [commented](#) [6], "Although the bill was given little chance of passing from the start, the petition helped to inform legislators and the public of the depth of resistance to such a bill within the academic and scientific community. Iowa faculty wanted to nip this bill in the bud before we had another Louisiana on our hands."

Avalos was alluding, of course, to the Louisiana Science Education Act, enacted (as Louisiana Revised Statutes 17:285.1) in 2008 over the protests of the state's scientific and educational communities; as the *Baton Rouge Advocate* (April 19, 2008) editorially [recognized](#) [7], "it seems clear that the supporters of this legislation are seeking a way to get creationism ... into science classrooms." The LSEA is the only "academic freedom' antievolution bill to have been passed, despite attempts to pass such bills elsewhere. So far in 2009, there have been six: Alabama's House Bill 300, Florida's Senate Bill 2396, Iowa's House File 183 (died in committee), Missouri's House Bill 656, New Mexico's Senate Bill 433, and Oklahoma's SB 320 (died in committee). Such bills are typically based on a policy adopted in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana, in 2006 and/or a model bill promoted by the Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture, the institutional home of "intelligent design" creationism.

[Anti-Evolution](#) [8]

[2009](#) [9]

[Iowa](#) [10]

[+ read](#) [3]

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Links

[1] <https://ncse.com/printpdf/13367>

[2] <https://ncse.com/users/glenn>

[3] <https://ncse.com/news/2009/03/antievolution-bill-dead-iowa-004653>

[4] <https://ncse.com/node/4667>

[5] <https://ncse.com/news/2009/03/iowa-faculty-decry-antievolution-bill-004633>

[6] <http://pandasthumb.org/archives/2009/03/iowa-gives-the.html>

[7] <http://www.theadvocate.com/opinion/17931559.html>

[8] <https://ncse.com/news/anti-evolution>

[9] <https://ncse.com/news/2009>

[10] <https://ncse.com/news/iowa>